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## The Proposed Reorganization of Centralia's Elementary Music Program

Ronald J. Brumbaugh  
*Central Washington University*

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THE PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF  
CENTRALIA'S ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM

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A Research Paper  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

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by  
Ronald J. Brumbaugh  
August, 1963

THIS PAPER IS APPROVED AS MEETING  
THE PLAN 2 REQUIREMENT FOR THE  
COMPLETION OF A RESEARCH PAPER

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G. RUSSELL ROSS  
FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

In a school system where there is not an adequate number of elementary music specialists, the classroom teacher must teach music. The fact that many classroom teachers are inadequately prepared to teach music may adversely affect the quality of the music program. At Centralia, Washington a reduction in the 1963-64 public school's budget caused responsible school officials to take a hard look at all aspects of the curriculum including music education in the elementary grades.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to compare the aims and objectives of various state and district elementary music programs; (2) to investigate published materials on the function of the classroom teacher and the music specialist; and (3) to formulate a progressive elementary music program for the Centralia, Washington Public Schools.

Importance of the study. Two contributing factors necessitated a cut in the 1963-1964 Centralia School District Budget. First, Centralia School District is one of

the districts in Lewis County where schools have been supported by the State from equalization funds and from revenue derived from timber cut by the logging industry. The last State Legislature cut out these funds.

Secondly, two building projects brought the school levies in Centralia up to their maximum limit. The public was still paying for the new Centralia Junior High School built in 1957, when it learned that additional classrooms and a library must be added to the Centralia Community College in order for this institution to maintain its accredited status. The enrollment in the college more than doubled in three years and more space had to be provided for the incoming students. Therefore the second levy was passed in 1961 to help the college meet its increasing needs. Centralia's school administrators were faced with the necessity to economize in some areas.

Overcrowded classrooms made it impossible to cut an elementary classroom teacher from the present staff. Thus it seemed logical to the administrators that a reasonable economy would be accomplished by eliminating one music specialist from the staff. This left the district with one elementary specialist to teach 110 music classes each week, an impossible task. Since the two junior high school music teachers and the college music instructor all taught a full

schedule, and the high school teacher handled a full teaching schedule in addition to supervisory duties, the remaining elementary specialist could expect no help from the other music staff. The obvious problem became how to reconstruct the elementary music program to retain maximum educational values with minimum teaching staff.

History of the Centralia general music program.

There was no organized elementary music program in Centralia until 1945. Periodically before this time there were music teachers in some of the grade schools, but these teachers each went their own way with no unification or district program.

In 1945 Lucile Doersch became elementary music supervisor. For the first year she taught seventeen or eighteen twenty-minute classes a day plus two unselected choruses, one at 8:30 and one at noon. With a few exceptions, she worked in all the rooms, grades one through eight, in the nine elementary schools. Therefore there was little time for preparation of classes and coordination of the program. The three elementary teachers who had taught prior to the time that Miss Doersch became supervisor remained active in the program. After the first year Miss Doersch set aside about a half-day a week for unifying music

activities in the grade schools.

After the employment of a new district superintendent, a new elementary grades music specialist taught music to seventh and eighth grade pupils who were transported from five of the grade schools to the new Washington building for music classes.

During the ten years that Miss Doersch acted as elementary music supervisor there was a fine feeling of cooperation from principals and teachers. All classroom teachers assumed some responsibility for the music program by staying in the room during the music teacher's visitation and trying to carry on the recommended activities during the week. However a definite music plan with a specific set of aims and objectives was not yet established.

Eight years ago, two specialists began teaching the elementary music in the Centralia Schools. These teachers met with students from six elementary schools two and three times weekly. Each specialist taught fifty to fifty-five, one-half-hour classes a week. Centralia's administrators planned for each elementary classroom teacher to have a half-hour rest break during the time the music specialist was in the room. Nevertheless, the classroom teacher was supposed to continue the music lesson at another time during the week when the specialist was not in the room. This plan



has not proved feasible because, if the classroom teacher did take the break to which she was entitled, she would obviously lose the opportunity to observe the specialist at work with the boys and girls. Thus, the original desirable relationship between classroom teacher and music specialist was broken down at the most important expense, the student's loss of educational experience.

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Elementary grades. The elementary grades referred to in this paper include the grades one through six in the public schools. This definition is opposed to those that classify grades one through three as "elementary grades" and grades four through six as "intermediate grades."

Music Specialist. "A qualified music specialist may be defined as one who has had all the education and music courses she needs to enable her to teach children to love and enjoy music" (18:36). The music specialist has also been referred to in related materials as music consultant, music coordinator, supervising teacher or music supervisor.

Classroom Teacher. The classroom teacher normally teaches all subjects in the grade or grades for which she is

responsible, with the possible exception of physical education.

Music Program. The music program is an over-all course of study in music provided by the school with the intent of giving each student an opportunity to participate in a richly varied group of musical experiences under the guidance of a resourceful and inspirational teacher.

## CHAPTER II

### SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

In order to set up a good elementary music program, it is necessary to have concrete aims and objectives and qualified personnel. This survey of literature is designed to study (1) the aims and objectives of other elementary music programs, and (2) the function of the music specialist in the elementary school.

#### I. STATE AND DISTRICT LEVEL ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Certain aims and objectives for the elementary grades are put forth in each statement of state and district music programs. In a study of the curriculum guides published by various school districts throughout the United States, the writer noticed that some of these aims were very generally stated while others were stated more specifically, in a grade by grade progression. The next few pages will illustrate how these basic aims overlapped. One of the first steps in setting up a program is determining what the program is to accomplish.

The objectives for music education should stem from our understanding of children as they react to music, from the manner in which children learn music and from our philosophy of music education.

Due to a misunderstanding of these subjects, music education has often developed objectives that children could never attain or has based programs on outmoded objectives. Certainly our objectives should be dedicated to all children and be within the ability and interest of all children (9:74).

Glenn wrote that the basic objectives of music in the elementary school should be:

1. Developing an ever increasing interest in music.
2. Enriching his cultural life through worthwhile musical experience.
3. Providing him a means of richer school, home and community life.
4. Stimulating, discovering, guiding, and developing his musical possibilities.
5. Developing and understanding the art of music in its relation to other subjects and life as a whole.
6. Seeing and recognizing music as an opportunity for individual and social development and as a worthy use of leisure time (9:73).

The music guide for the State of Tennessee listed its major objectives for a school system-wide program in two simple statements. However, these two statements actually embodied six objectives. As stated these objectives were:

1. To help children enjoy music through participation in singing, listening, rhythmic, instrumental and creative activities.
2. To arouse an interest on the part of both the teacher and pupil for further growth and development in music (22:2).

The compilers of California's music manual believed that an elementary music education should help boys and girls accomplish the following:

1. Develop a love for and an appreciation of music.
2. Sing, play or listen intelligently according to their individual interest and ability.
3. Develop their emotional natures.
4. Develop a desire for the worthy and beautiful in their lives (5:3).

Every child in the elementary program should have music experience according to the stated philosophy of Montana educators (15:4). Children should have the following experiences in their music classes: (1) singing, (2) listening to music, (3) expressive bodily movement activities, (4) playing instruments, (5) creative activities and, (6) integration of music with other areas of instruction.

South Dakota and Washington State both adopted the "Child's Bill of Rights in Music" prepared by the Music Educators National Conference:

Every child has the right for full and free opportunity to explore and develop his capacities in the field of music in such ways as may bring him happiness and a sense of well-being; stimulate his imagination and stir his creative activities; and make him so responsive that he will cherish and seek to renew the fine feelings induced by music.

As his right, every child shall have the opportunity to experience music with other people so that his own enjoyment shall be heightened and he shall

be led into greater appreciation of the feelings and aspirations of others.

As his right, every child shall have opportunity to make music through being guided and instructed in singing, in playing at least one instrument both alone and with other, and, so far as his powers and interests permit, in composing music.

As his right, every child shall have the opportunity to grow in musical appreciation, knowledge, and skill, through instruction equal to that given in any other subject in all the free public educational programs that may be offered to children and youths.

As his right, every child shall be given the opportunity to have his interest and power in music explored and developed to the end that unusual talent may be utilized for the enrichment of the individual and society.

Every child has the right to such teaching as will sensitize, refine, elevate, and enlarge not only his appreciation of music but also his whole affective nature, to the end that the high part such developed feeling may play in raising the stature of mankind may be revealed to him (16:52).

In addition to these rights the South Dakota Guide also contained the idea that

all children in the elementary schools should share daily experiences in music and participate in a planned and capably directed class in music instruction. Moreover, it is vastly important that children discover music informally and very naturally as part of the common core of subjects comprising the elementary curriculum (19:6).

The objectives of three districts in Washington State were stated somewhat philosophically. The Bellevue district states that:

1. Music is an important part of the basic curriculum.
2. Music experiences should be provided every child.
3. Each child should have a background and understanding of music fundamentals.
4. Each child should have an appreciation of a wide variety of music.
5. Every child should have many opportunities for participating in music activities.
6. There should be music for boys and girls (3:1).

The Tacoma district states that:

1. To make musical growth a part of the natural development of every child.
2. To vary music activities at all grade levels so that each child will find some experiences which fit his needs.
3. To give each child the satisfying experience of expressing himself musically.
4. To help children to better social and emotional adjustment through participation in varied and satisfying music activities (21:2).

The Centralia district states that:

1. Strive to have music play an integral part in the cultural life of the student, the school and the community.
2. To develop to whatever extent possible the creative, interpretive and appreciative abilities of the individual.
3. To help the individual find in the musical art: emotional release, and thorough joy in the art and develop the social being (23:1).

From the compilation of the aims and objectives of

other districts, these aims emerged as being very important, or basic to an elementary music program: (1) developing basic music skills; (2) finding and developing the singing voice; (3) giving the student experience on rhythm and formal instruments; (4) developing creativity, self-expression and physical response to rhythm; (5) developing an interest, love and appreciation for music; (6) encouraging social and cultural development through music; (7) finding and developing musical talent; (8) integrating music with other subjects whenever possible.

## II. THE CLASSROOM TEACHER AND MUSIC SPECIALIST

Centralia has no elementary instrumental music program. Students may start beginning band in a summer band program or in the junior high school after they have completed sixth grade. In order that these instrumental students may progress as rapidly as possible, the music specialist must teach notation. Some educators give valid reasons for the classroom teacher's participation in the music program. However, "the unmusical teacher can take training courses in elementary music teaching year after year and still not be able to convert successfully children to music readers" (10:56).

The classroom teacher. Banse, speaking for the



educators who favor the classroom teacher's participation in the music program, stated these reasons to support his position (2:78):

1. According to the Music Education Source Book, music should be a part of the children's experience at least 100 minutes a week. In these days of expanding school systems and limited school budgets how else can a busy music specialist meet this minimum except by enlisting the participation of the classroom teacher?
2. If the classroom teacher does participate daily in your music program, then it is less likely that music will be considered to be a "special" subject by the classroom teacher, administration and students alike, but will be considered to be an essential part of the daily curricular pattern in the classroom.
3. The classroom teacher knows better than the specialist the general abilities and needs of the individual children in her classroom. The classroom teacher, with the assistance of the music teacher or consultant can make music meaningful for every child.
4. The classroom teacher can offer an elastic program of instruction when she can bring music to the children as it best fits into each daily schedule in her classroom.
5. A more complete and continuous type of classroom program can be the result when the grade teacher can combine music activities with other areas of the curriculum. The music specialist can help her find adequate resources.

Samuel L. Forcucci gives these same arguments for the classroom teacher, but he recognizes that there is much disagreement among educators about who should teach elementary music. He suggests

that even though there is a difference of opinion,

certain general areas, if not individual schools, should at least come to some agreement with regard to whichever approach best meets their particular needs, and in turn make every effort to implement this system (7:132).

An indication that administrators would prefer not to implement a music program based on the self-contained classroom concept was seen in two separate surveys. The first survey conducted in 1959 by the Texas College of Arts and Industries summarized its findings as follows:

1. Two-thirds of the school districts in Texas use special music teachers to teach music in at least the upper three elementary grades.
2. Nearly nine-tenths of the school superintendents in Texas favor the use of special music teachers for their elementary music instruction.
3. Slightly over half of the superintendents in Texas believe that the trend is toward a greater use of special music teachers for music instruction in elementary schools.
4. One-fourth of the school districts in Texas have definite plans to either increase or initiate the use of special music teachers in their elementary school programs (13:60).

The second survey conducted in 1961 by graduate students of the University of Oklahoma indicated that "63.4 per cent of the respondents preferred specialized music instruction to all other plans, and 69 per cent rated the self-contained classroom as the least desirable plan"(4:42).

It seems the supporters of the classroom teacher's position in elementary music have overlooked one serious weakness in this plan. The classroom teacher must have both

the competency and the desire to teach music or an effective and meaningful program is not possible. Practically without exception, classroom teachers are lacking here. "Music is a skill, and skills take longer to learn than educational concepts" (18:38). In order for teacher training institutions to graduate teachers who are better prepared musically, it would be necessary to add several required courses to the prospective teacher's already overloaded schedule.

There are ways in which the music specialist may aid the classroom teacher in her music teaching. Phelps suggests that the classroom teacher may achieve some competency in music teaching through an in-service training program.

The supervising teacher in this case actually serves as a master teacher and shows the classroom teacher exactly how certain phases of the music program are to be taught (18:37).

Banse suggests that you can get the classroom teacher to accept the challenge of teaching music by showing her that

There is some sort of music experience in which she can take leadership in her classroom. Perhaps, initially, a grade teacher would be able only to beat a steady rhythmic pattern on a drum while children responded; or perhaps, she would venture to lead the class in a few well-known songs. The important thing, however, is for that grade teacher to have a successful experience in whatever kind of music activity she chooses to use (2:78).

Burnsworth believes colleges should direct certain students in a program where

Their college education would consist of the normal emphasis on elementary education, but with a minor field of twenty-eight to thirty-two hours in basic music courses thoughtfully structured and taught in terms of the necessary skills and abilities appropriate to the elementary level (4:42).

These students would have an accentuated study of children's song literature, rhythm instruments and other elementary music activities, and would dispense with such courses as counterpoint, orchestration and advanced theory which have little practical application to the elementary music program. The certificates of such teachers would be restricted to teaching music in grades one through six in order to preserve the quality of training for other levels of music.

The music specialist. Some of the arguments stated earlier for the use of the classroom teacher in the music program can be used interchangeably for the use of the specialist. The music specialist can integrate musical activities with other areas of the curriculum, and look into the needs and abilities of individual children to make music more meaningful for all. In addition to this, the specialist has the necessary training to decide "the form, materials, over-all timing and general methods of teaching music"(2:46).

The accomplishment of the highest aims in music can be brought about by resourceful teachers who love

music and know how to utilize its possibilities. As teachers are themselves filled with a love and knowledge of music and feel the need of it in their own lives, and strive to round out children's lives, they lead children to experience the peculiar joys that come to the music lover (6:113).

Hubbard believes that the music specialist should have (1) a developed native musical ability, (2) an ability to play moderately difficult accompaniments in a musical manner, (3) a sufficient understanding of vocal tone production and sufficient singing skill to guarantee fine musical results from the students committed to his charge and (4) a personality to be a leader and demand respect of others. He thinks that, most of all, the specialist

should have an overwhelming enthusiasm for music... . A keen zest for music "carries away" a group of children or adults and through its contagion transforms the music period from routine into inspired interest. Without a sincere love of music the teacher cannot get more than mechanical results and thereby loses the essence of music itself (12:17).

## CHAPTER III

### PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF CENTRALIA'S ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM

Plan for 1963-64. In May the music supervisor received notification of the necessity to reduce the elementary grades music staff. There was not sufficient time to properly review the music teaching competencies of the present elementary school teachers. In order to determine this it was deemed essential to interview each teacher personally to determine her knowledge of and interest in the subject. The music specialist staff met and devised the following plan for the ensuing school year:

1. Each teacher will be responsible for her own music with the music specialist acting as demonstrating consultant. If a teacher feels she cannot teach music she may exchange classes during the music period with another teacher who feels more adequately prepared.
2. Grades one, two, three, and four will use educational television with additional supplementary work for other music periods.
3. Skeleton plans will be prepared by the music specialist and distributed to the classroom teachers each month, so approximately the same material will be covered through-

out the district at the same time. Plans will try to fit individual rooms and situations.

4. The present listening program will be expanded.
5. The music specialist will be scheduled to go to each of the larger schools one morning, and the two smaller schools one afternoon each week to help as needed.
6. The remainder of the specialist's time will be used for the distribution of materials, extra conferences as needed, and making of skeleton plans.
7. During the year each elementary teacher will be contacted for suggestions which might help make teaching music easier, and for evaluations of the aims and objectives of the elementary music program.

This plan must be regarded only as a temporary emergency measure to provide music in the elementary program until the projected plan attains its goal. The music staff will meet at various times during the year to discuss the suggestions of the elementary teachers and attempt to revise and improve the music plan for each school.

Projected plan. Each spring there are elementary teachers who for various reasons do not renew their contracts. In the future when a teacher leaves a grade school, the administration has agreed to find replacement by an elementary

teacher who has had a strong music background and who would enjoy teaching music. The replacement will teach music in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades on an exchange-class basis with other teachers. This will necessitate careful scheduling of certain subjects, but the departmentalization of a few subjects has already been accepted by the administration and most of the teachers.

The replacement of teachers according to the plan will continue until there is a trained music teacher teaching music in a specially equipped music room in each of the five larger elementary schools. In the estimated four or five years that it should take for the plan's fulfillment, school funds will be building up so that as a music teacher in one grade school assumes a full-time position, a teacher may be added to take over her self-contained classroom.

The present music specialist will become the elementary music supervisor. As supervisor she will teach music in the two small grade schools, which have only two classrooms each, and supervise the elementary music teachers.

Justification of the plan. The establishment of a music specialist in each elementary school will give Centralia students an opportunity to participate in musical activities which have not been offered in the past. The music specialist will be able to organize choruses, ensembles,



and rhythm and melody instrument classes for interested students.

It is true that the departmentalization of subjects and changing of classes in the intermediate phases of the plan will require a little more scheduling and the utmost cooperation between principals, classroom teachers and music staff. However, if this departmentalization is left to the discretion of the teachers and principals of each school, other subject matter in addition to music could be strengthened by it. A teacher with a specialized art or science background, for instance, could teach her subject to several classes instead of one. In recognizing teachers with special training each school can make the best possible use of its staff.

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